

Best Practices in

Reading Workshop Instruction for Elementary Literacy Teachers

Big Ideas	Developing	Effective	Highly Effective
<p>Establishes predictable Reading Workshop structure</p>	<p>Teacher frequently implements Reading Workshop components, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned mini-lesson (may include read-aloud and/or shared reading). Independent work time where students read “just right” books independently. Supported literacy activities for beginning readers (e.g., listening to books on tape). Individual student conferences or small reading groups during independent time. Sharing time for closure at end of workshop. <p>Teacher incorporates read-alouds into Reading Workshop every day, either during mini-lessons or as separate activity.</p>	<p>Teacher regularly implements Reading Workshop components, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned, 15–20-minute mini-lesson based on students’ needs as determined by observation (may include read-aloud and/or shared reading). Independent work time for an extended period, where students read “just right” books independently, discuss books with response partners, and write a literature response in reading journals every other week. Supported literacy activities for beginning readers (e.g., listening to books on tape, re-reading big books and poetry, buddy reading). Individual student conferences or small reading groups during independent time. Sharing time during Reading Workshop closure, where students share their experiences from independent reading time. <p>Teacher incorporates read-alouds into Reading Workshop every day, either during mini-lessons or as a separate activity.</p>	<p>Teacher implements 60–90-minute Reading Workshop components daily, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fifteen- to 20-minute mini-lessons with focused and appropriate intended learning statements, which introduce and/or support instruction during other literacy opportunities (e.g., guided reading, independent reading, Writing Workshop). Lessons address identified standards and meet students’ needs as determined by ongoing observation and assessment (may include read-aloud and/or shared reading). Independent work time for an extended period, where students read “just right” books independently and/or with partners, discuss books with response partners or group, and write weekly literature responses in reading journals. Supported, individualized literacy activities for beginning readers that build on previous instruction (e.g., listening to specific books on tape, rereading big books and poetry, buddy reading for fluency and comprehension purposes). Individual student conferences or small guided reading or oral language groups and organized time to meet students frequently to ensure they engage in meaningful literacy experiences during work time. During Reading Workshop closure, being selective about which students share insights and experiences from their independent reading time, so they refer to mini-lesson. All students are given opportunity to share at some point. If available, paraprofessionals or classroom volunteers working directly with students during most of assigned time. <p>Teacher incorporates read-alouds into Reading Workshop every day, either during mini-lessons or as a separate activity.</p>

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<p>Sets up rich, literate classroom environment</p>	<p>Classroom Library</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can access a variety of books and materials. Books are organized by either levels or genres. <p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom has appropriate space used for whole group gatherings. Students' desks are organized to allow some student interaction. Classroom arrangement emphasizes teacher-directed instruction. <p>Classroom Displays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some charts and rubrics, generally teacher-developed, are posted or accessible. Classrooms and hallways display some student work. 	<p>Classroom Library</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can access a variety of books and reading materials representing various topics of interest, genres, and authors. Books are effectively sorted and labeled in a way students understand; students can easily access appropriately leveled books. <p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom has appropriate space identified for whole group gatherings. Classroom arrangement reflects mix of teacher- and student-directed interactions. <p>Classroom Displays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher and students occasionally refer to class-developed charts and rubrics that are posted or accessible. Teacher and students often refer to relevant, easy-to-read displays during discussions. Classrooms and hallways display student work. Some charts contain pictures to support beginning readers and/or ELLs. 	<p>Classroom Library</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can access a wide collection of culturally diverse books that represent various topics and genres. Spanish leveled books are available in ELA-E classrooms where some students are literate in Spanish. Books and reading materials, appropriate to students' needs and interests, are available to support science and social studies instruction. Books are effectively sorted and labeled so students can explain, maintain, and use the library independently. Books are arranged attractively and invitingly. Students regularly take home books and other reading materials. <p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom arrangement accommodates a variety of student groupings (i.e., whole group, small groups, partners, independent work). Classroom arrangement emphasizes student interactions, in addition to teacher-directed interactions. Teacher encourages productive, accountable talk by having areas and times for students to work together. <p>Classroom Displays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class-developed charts, examples, and rubrics with appropriate visuals provide effective student references (within fire code regulations). Students can explain how to use charts and displays that reflect current classroom teaching and learning. Classrooms and hallways routinely display student work to provide literacy opportunities and examples of learning and to celebrate students' accomplishments. Regularly changed displays reflect ongoing learning. Pictures or other visuals accompany displayed information to support beginning readers and/or ELLs.

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<p>Develops student independence and sense of community</p>	<p>Some rituals and routines have been discussed, and students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage their behavior with significant teacher support. • Follow directions as to what to do next. • Know how to care for resources. • Move around the room with teacher permission. • Begin to problem solve to minimize behavior issues. 	<p>Rituals and routines are established, and students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage their behavior with some teacher support. • Know what is expected during work time. • Refer to goals while reading. • Transition from one activity to another with teacher support. • Maintain resources respectfully. • Work well with reading partners and in groups for short periods. • Move around the room to locate resources during a time teacher determines. • Problem solve to minimize behavior issues. <p>Teacher uses contracts and a predictable behavior management system to support students, if needed.</p>	<p>Rituals and routines are firmly established, and students routinely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the “why” behind rituals and routines and take responsibility for maintaining them. • Stay on task and manage their behavior independently. • Use charts and artifacts individually to support their learning. • Transition from one activity to another efficiently, independently, and respectfully. • Know what to do during work time and when they finish an activity. • Maintain resources respectfully. • Work well with reading partners and in small reading groups, listening and responding appropriately. • Move around the room without disruption to locate resources and confer with reading partners. • Problem solve to minimize behavior issues and encourage respect for others’ learning. <p>Teacher uses contracts and a predictable behavior management system to support students, if needed.</p>

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<p>Provides effective whole group instruction in mini-lessons</p>	<p>Teacher sometimes does mini-lessons, using <i>Making Meaning</i> and other materials.</p> <p>Mini-lessons sometimes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections to previous learning. • Demonstration, think aloud, or explanation. • Some student involvement. • Student sharing. <p>Mini-lessons may address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension strategies. • Some reading components, including phonemic awareness and phonics. 	<p>Teacher provides daily mini-lessons, using <i>Making Meaning</i> and other materials (including big books and other shared reading materials) to address comprehension and other reading strategies. Students are expected to practice skills during independent reading. Teacher incorporates sheltered instructional techniques for ELLs.</p> <p>Mini-lessons are 15–20 minutes long and usually include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections to previous learning. • Intended learning statement. • Explicit demonstration, think aloud, or explanation. • Active student involvement, with significant opportunities for accountable talk. • Student sharing. <p>Mini-lessons may address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension strategies (<i>Making Meaning</i>). • Reading components, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and/or vocabulary. • Genres (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, poetry). • Author studies. 	<p>Daily related mini-lessons are part of a coordinated instructional focus, as determined by standards and assessed students' needs. Teacher uses read-alouds, shared reading materials, and demonstrations and modeling to make the intended learning clear. Teacher develops own mini-lessons or adapts published mini-lessons, such as those in <i>Making Meaning</i>, to address specific needs and ensure students have adequate time to practice the skills during independent reading. Teacher incorporates sheltered instructional techniques and differentiated instruction for ELLs.</p> <p>Fifteen- to 20-minute mini-lessons always include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections to previous learning. • Intended learning statement. • Explicit demonstration (modeling), think aloud, or explanation. • Active student involvement, with significant opportunities for accountable talk. • A link to students' independent work. Students attempt to apply skills taught in mini-lessons during small group and independent work. • Student sharing linked to mini-lesson instructional focus. <p>Mini-lessons address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension strategies (<i>Making Meaning</i>). • Reading components, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. • Genres (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, poetry; linked to Writing Workshop genre studies). • Author studies (linked to writing in literature response).

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<p>Individualizes student instruction during reading conferences and small reading groups</p> <p><i>(Note: More specific information on small reading group instruction is available in guided reading best practices.)</i></p>	<p>Reading Conferences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher meets individual students occasionally to determine if they have appropriate independent reading books. Teacher listens to students read and talks with them about their books. Teacher selects books for students' book bags. Teacher sometimes writes goals for students. <p>Small Reading Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher groups students using beginning-of-year assessments, such as DRA or EDL. Small instructional groups focus on reading strategies and skills identified in district resources (guided reading handouts and professional readings) for that instructional level. Teacher selects text for students' approximate instructional levels. 	<p>Reading Conferences</p> <p>During reading conferences with students (once a month), teacher includes some of the following activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting and recording information in reading assessment notebooks about students' reading (including comprehension, phonics, fluency, and attitude). Listening and/or taking running records as students read aloud to identify reading skills and strategies. Assisting students' reading by prompting for strategies and reinforcing reading skills. Assessing comprehension as students retell their stories. Setting goals with students. Supporting students in learning to select "just right," challenging, and high-interest books for independent reading. Connecting to Skills Block instruction. <p>Small Reading Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher groups students flexibly, using instructional reading levels (and sometimes strategies) as determined by ongoing assessment (e.g., reading conferences, running records). Teacher occasionally regroups students. Small instructional groups focus on reading strategies and skills appropriate for students' instructional levels with an awareness of students' needs in the five reading components of comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, phonics, and phonemic awareness. Teachers address these needs by including some extensions and connections to guided reading work, such as interactive writing, word work, and re-reading for fluency. Teacher selects text for appropriate instructional reading levels as determined by reading conferences and ongoing assessment. 	<p>Reading Conferences</p> <p>During frequent individual students conferences (twice a month), teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects and records information in reading assessment notebooks about student's attitudes and interests as readers, comprehension and ability to self-monitor, and reading strategies and skills (including phonics and fluency). Talks with student in an authentic conversation that resembles book club talk. Reinforces student's use of strategies and identifies one or two teaching points for focus, considering previous observations and reading conferences. Teaches to teaching points by demonstrating, providing guided practice, and supporting independent efforts. Works with student to write a specific, important reading goal that will move student forward in reading and can be attained in a short time. Monitors student progress toward meeting the goal during subsequent conferences and sets new goals with student. Connects teaching points to Skills Block instruction. Encourages student to reflect on self as a reader and develop awareness of favorite authors and genres, personal interests regarding reading, etc. <p>Small Reading Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher groups students flexibly, using instructional reading and language levels and analysis of strategies and skills, as determined by ongoing assessment (e.g., reading conferences, running records). Teacher reflects on students' needs and regroups accordingly. Small instructional groups focus on oral language, reading strategies, and skills appropriate for students' instructional and language levels. Teacher deeply understands the five reading components of comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, phonics, and phonemic awareness and addresses these components in the guided reading lesson structure. Teacher selects text based on students' instructional and language levels and known words, strategies, skills, and concepts. Text provides opportunities to address lesson focus and individual and group needs. Teacher includes different genres, including fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Sometimes texts might connect to Writing Workshop genres or content study, but only if they appropriately support students.

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<p>Uses literacy artifacts effectively, including book bags, reading assessment notebooks, and reading folders</p>	<p>Book Bags</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher chooses books for students' book bags, including some "just right" books. Book bags are refreshed every two to three weeks. <p>Reading Assessment Notebooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notebooks show occasional teacher entries from reading conferences with some information about student strategies and a student goal. Goals tend to be general and may over-emphasize one strategy (e.g., phonics). <p>Reading Folders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading folders contain reading logs, response journals or response sheets, and reading assessment notebooks. 	<p>Book Bags</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher works with students to choose "just right" (95% or above accuracy) books for book bags for independent reading. Book bags are refreshed during guided reading or reading conferences. Teacher offers additional literacy opportunities to engage emergent readers (e.g., listening to books on tape, partner reading). <p>Reading Assessment Notebooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher makes entries every two or three weeks that may include running records and/or comments about comprehension, phonics, and fluency. Teacher and student write a goal together for the next two to three weeks. <p>Reading Folders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading folders contain reading logs, response journals or response sheets, and reading assessment notebooks. Teacher uses reading folders to monitor student progress and track reading goals. 	<p>Book Bags</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students choose interesting and "just right" books (with teacher support) for book bags for independent reading. Teacher and students refresh book bags as appropriate, so students engage in reading independently for extended periods. Teacher offers additional, individualized literacy opportunities to engage emergent readers (e.g., listening to specific books on tape, partner reading). <p>Reading Assessment Notebooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher makes frequent entries during reading conferences and guided reading that include observations (including running records, if appropriate) about student's self-assessments about reading and his or her use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strategies for phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. language. accountable talk. Teacher and student determine and highlight a goal based on strategies appropriate to student's developmental reading stage that represents clear "next steps" for that student for the next two to three weeks. <p>Reading Folders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading folders contain reading logs, response journals or response sheets, and reading assessment notebooks. Teacher and students use reading folders to monitor student progress and track reading goals. Teacher uses reading assessment notebooks to drive instruction.

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<p>Works to meet ALL students' needs during Reading Workshop (e.g., ELL, special education, gifted and talented)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read-alouds, shared readings, and mini-lessons are aimed at most students' listening comprehension levels. • Teacher builds on students' background knowledge. • Teacher sometimes has students turn and talk and buddy read. • Teacher selects books for book bags based on students' reading levels. • Teacher encourages students to write about what they are reading. Students sometimes share during sharing time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read-alouds, shared readings, and mini-lessons are aimed at most students' listening comprehension levels. Teacher uses SIOP techniques, including using visuals and/or realia and gestures, for students who will be challenged by the book. • Teacher builds on students' background experiences and concept knowledge. • Teacher has students turn and talk during mini-lessons and sometimes buddy read and discuss their books during independent reading time to offer more support and give opportunities for oral language practice. • Teacher helps students select materials for book bags carefully, based on reading levels, concepts, and support the books offer and considers these characteristics for small group reading instruction. • Charts and rubrics often have icons. • Teacher encourages students to share books they are reading in multiple ways (e.g., oral sharing, written responses, drawing pictures). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read-alouds, shared readings, and mini-lessons are aimed at most students' listening comprehension levels. For students who will be challenged by the book, teacher may prepare those students in small groups in advance to support their engagement during whole group instruction. While giving mini-lessons, teacher uses SIOP techniques, including using visuals and/or realia, gesturing and acting out, having students repeat in their own words what they are to do, prompting students appropriately to respond at their language proficiency levels, and extending their language. • Teacher builds on students' strengths and connects to their background experiences and literacy knowledge in their first language. • Teacher uses various grouping formats for students who need more support, such as buddy reading, cooperative book discussion groups, and/or turn-and-talk procedures. Students participate in both homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings to meet different purposes. • Teacher offers students frequent, multiple opportunities to interact with one another and use oral language purposefully during whole group, small group, and independent time. • Teacher helps students select materials for book bags carefully, based on student reading and language levels, concept knowledge, cultural background, interest, and support the books offer and considers these characteristics for small group reading materials. • All charts and rubrics are written with student input and in child-friendly language with visuals or icons to support meaning. • Teacher offers students who can be responsible for their book discussions the training and opportunity to meet in student-directed book clubs. • Teacher encourages students to share books they are reading in multiple ways, such as giving oral recommendations, writing book reviews, drawing pictures, doing Readers Theater, and/or creating bulletin boards about their favorite books.